

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5 and 7-13 are present in this application, claim 6 is canceled by way of the present amendment. Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Claims 1, 2, 5, 11 and 12 are rejected over U.S. 5,672,978 (Kimura '978), claims 3-6 and 13 are rejected over Kimura '978 in view of U.S. 6,297,652 (Shimoda et al.) and claims 7-10 are rejected over Kimura '978 in view of Shimoda et al. and further in view of U.S. 2002/0060583 (Kimura '583).

The claims have been amended to change "4" to --four-- as requested in paragraph 2 of the Office Action.

The present invention is directed to an inspection apparatus for inspecting the electrical properties of a circuit board and a wiring board. In the inspection apparatus, the wiring board for connection in the adapter is capable to be curved in such a manner that when the adapter is held under pressure by the respective pressing pins in the pressing pin mechanism and the respective electrodes to be inspected of the circuit board, portions being applied with the pressing force by the respective pressing pins and the respective electrodes to be inspected are shifted in the pressing directions. A non-limiting example of the curvature is shown in Fig. 7. Such an inspection apparatus is not disclosed or suggested by the prior art, as explained below.

Kimura '978 discloses in Fig. 9 an inspection apparatus having inspection heads 68 and 68', off-grid adapters 63 and 63', pitch-converting boards 66 and 66', and anisotropically electroconductive sheets 67, 67', 71 and 71'. Boards 66 and 66' have respective electrodes 64 and 64', and heads 68 and 68' have respective inspection electrodes 69 and 69'. A printed circuit board 61 having electrodes 62 and 62' is to be inspected by the apparatus. See column 10, line 27 et seq. Pressing plate 77 presses unit 70 downward, and accepting plate 78 being a cushion is provided. See column 11, lines 5-14.

The Office Action finds inspection pins 69 to be pressing pins and head 68 and press plate 77 to be a pressing pin mechanism. Pins 69 are shown as pads and are not pressing pins. Further, without pressing pins, there is no pressing pin mechanism. The Office Action on page 10 also states that board 66 is capable of being curved but there is no mention of board being curved in Kimura '978. Being arranged between sheets 67 and 71, even if the sheets have "elastic properties" as asserted in the Office Action, simply describes the position of board 66 and not its ability or capability of being curved. There must be some evidence that board 66 is capable of being curved. The Office Action has not provided any evidence and thus the rejection of the claims based upon the unsupported assertion that board 66 may be curved cannot stand.

Shimoda et al. and Kimura '583 are cited for teachings related to terminal electrodes arranged in a way to be electrically connected to connecting electrodes for current supply and voltage measurement, and an anisotropic conductive elastomer sheet, respectively. Even if such teachings could be combined with Kimura '978, the deficiencies noted above in Kimura '978 would not be cured.

In the apparatus of claims 1 and 3, which are amended to recite elements from claim 6, wherein the adapter is held under pressure by the respective pressing pins in the pressing pin mechanism and the adapter is able to be curved. As Kimura '978 does not disclose or suggest such an apparatus, and Shimoda et al. and Kimura '583 do not cure the deficiencies of Kimura '978, claims 1 and 3 are patentable over these three references.

Accordingly, claims 1 and 3 are patentably distinguishable over the cited prior art, and it is therefore respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 3 are in condition for allowance.

In the wiring board recited in claims 12 and 13, the portions being applied with the pressing force are capable to be curved so as to be shifted in the pressing direction. None of Kimura et al., Shimoda et al. or Kimura '583 disclose or suggest such a board, evident from

the discussion of these references above. It is respectfully submitted that claims 12 and 13 are also patentably distinguishable over the cited references, and thus in condition for allowance.

It is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and a favorable decision to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Registration No. 25,599

Carl E. Schlier
Registration No. 34,426
Attorneys of Record

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 03/06)

I:\ATTY\CES\287441US-AM DUE 8-3-07.DOC